

Soccer: CU Buffs gaining confidence after another win Buffs remain unbeaten on young season

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Colorado soccer players really have no interest in talking about last year.

Why would they? This year has been too much fun.

On Sunday, Anne Stuller scored two more goals and the Buffs remained undefeated with a 2-1 win against Wright State at Prentup Field to complete the Omni Hotels Classic.

"We're flying high right now," Stuller said. "We're feeling good."

A year ago, CU finished 4-13-2 and won just twice after a 2-0 start.

While they are still several games away from starting tough Pac-12 Conference play, Sunday's win improved the Buffs to 3-0-1. It's only the second time in school history the Buffs have been unbeaten through the first four games (also going 3-0-1 in 2006).

"I think our confidence is pretty high right now," senior Shaye Marshall said. "We're 3-0-1 and two wins at home is awesome."

Perhaps nobody on the team is as confident as Stuller right now. The Fairview High graduate notched her third two-goal game of the season, tying a school record for most multi-goal games in one season. Nikki Marshall (2006) and Katie Griffin (2005) are the only other players with three.

"For me personally, I'm pretty shocked by how lucky I've been and I hope it keeps going," said Stuller, who has scored six of CU's seven goals this season. She tied for the team lead with four goals in 2011.

CU opened the game Sunday by putting a lot of pressure on the Raiders (2-1-1). Wright State keeper Brooke McCurdy made great saves on shots by Stuller and Amy Barczuk early, however.

Then, at the 26:15 mark of the first half, Stuller blasted a shot from about 30 yards out that found the back of the net and gave the Buffs a lead.

CU head coach Danny Sanchez was pleased to see the goal, but not pleased with how the Buffs played after that.

"Stuller scored a nice goal in the first half and I think we just started to relax in the middle of the second half," Sanchez said. "You could sense it was a lull. The speed of play was slow, the tempo was slow. On a Sunday at home, we need to pick up the tempo and it wasn't there."

CU found a temporary burst late in the second half. Marshall, who had perhaps her best game of the season, put a hard shot on net that McCurdy blocked. Stuller was there, however, and punched in the rebound.

"No one was pressuring, so I thought I'd take a shot and Stu was there to finish it," Marshall said. "That second goal was awesome. It was a great finish by Anne."

As she has all year, Stuller gave credit to someone else.

"My second goal of the game was really a tap-in," she said. "It was all Shaye. I've just been fortunate to put in so many goals this year."

Up to that point, CU's defense had been fortunate enough to prevent any goals this season. In fact, the Buffs were less than five minutes away from posting a fourth straight shutout -- something they've only done twice in program

history.

Wright State ended the shutout streak, though, when Lauren Patterson scored on a header at the 85:32 mark. CU's defense had played 375 minutes and 32 seconds of scoreless soccer to that point.

The Buffs hung on in the final five minutes and prevailed once again.

"We can't complain about a win," Marshall said. "It was a little scary there in the last 20 minutes, but it was a great win for us."

During the two-game Omni Hotels Classic, CU outscored its opponents 4-1 and outshot them 28-10.

"It's really exciting to get off to a good start for the season," freshman midfielder Madison Krauser said. "The results have really been showing how we've been playing. It's great to be winning right now."

In the first game on Sunday, Denver defeated LIU Brooklyn 2-0. Kristen Hamilton and Taylor Ivins scored second-half goals for the Pioneers. Lara Campbell and Maria Khan combined on the shutout in goal.

Notable

Since Nikki Marshall graduated after the 2009 season, CU has had just four games in which a player had multiple goals. All four have come from Stuller. ... Sophomore Storie Ledger missed both games this weekend with a pulled hamstring. Sanchez believes Ledger will return for next Sunday's game at Northwestern. ... Krauser is the only freshman to have started all four games for CU this season. ... CU keeper Annie Brunner notched her 14th career win, tied for fourth on CU's all-time list. ... Sunday's attendance was 1,022. For the weekend, CU had 2,238 fans for its two games.

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Colorado 2, Wright State 1

At Prentup Field

Wright State (2-1-1) 0 1 -- 1

Colorado (3-0-1) 1 1 -- 2

Goals (assists) -- CU: Anne Stuller (Quinn Krier), 26:15; CU: Stuller (Shaye Marshall), 80:00; WS: Lauren Patterson (Sarah Gross), 85:32.

Goalkeepers (Min-Goals allowed-Saves) -- WS: Brooke McCurdy (90-2-3); CU: Annie Brunner (90-1-2).